

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Fig. 3 and replaces the original sheet with Fig. 3.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 10-15 and 19-22 are pending in this application.

By this Amendment, claims 1 and 10 are amended, claims 7-9 and 16-18 are canceled, claims 19-22 are added, the specification is amended to correspond to the amended claims, and Fig. 3 is amended for clarity. In particular, Fig. 3 is amended to add the symbol alpha at the top of the eighth column. No new matter is added by this Amendment. Support for the amendment to claims 1 and 10 is found in the specification and drawings. In particular, it is clear from the described embodiments and examples, that the order of "stacking" of the layers can be varied. Support for the new claims can be found in the figures. It is clear from the description that the amendment to Fig. 3 is an obvious correction of an error in Fig. 3 as originally filed.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,660,930 (Bertero).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 7-9 and 16-18 are canceled. Thus, with respect to these claims, this rejection is moot.

According to Bertero, the layers 44 and 48 are formed from the same "first" metal. If this metal is Pt or Pd, then neither layer can be equated with the present noble metal layer of claim 1, which is formed from Ag, Au, Ru, or Cu. If the first metal of Bertero is a noble metal such as Au, Ag or Cu (see Bertero, col. 5, lines 63-66), then the structure of Bertero does not correspond to the structure as recited in claims 1 and 10 because the transition metal element layer 46 of Bertero is not in contact with a platinum group element layer. Accordingly, neither layer 44 nor 48 of Bertero can be equated with the metal noble layer of claims 1 and 10. That is, Bertero fails to disclose that the transition metal element layer and the platinum group element layer are in direct contact with one another, as recited in claims 1 and 10.

New claims 19-22 further distinguish from Bertero. In particular, Bertero discloses layer 50 preferably sandwiched between two "first metal" layers 44 and 48. If the layer 50 of Bertero were equated with the claimed noble metal layer, it would be sandwiched between either two platinum group element layers or two noble metal layers, and not between a transition metal element layer, as recited in claims 21 and 22.

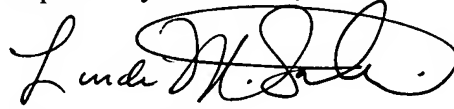
For the foregoing reasons, claims 1 and 10, as well as the claims depending therefrom, are not anticipated by Bertero. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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